



## Life Group Questions

*Jonah 1:7-16*<sup>1</sup>

April 30, 2017

### REVIEW

Last week we learned that in a time when the word from the Lord was scarce, Jonah, a prophet of Israel, ran *away* from the word of the Lord when he should have run *towards* the Ninevites. Four times the text tells us that Jonah went “down” in his attempt to run from the presence of the Lord—but he could not hide, even at the bottom of a boat.

What drove Jonah in his attempt to flee from the word of the Lord? The text seems to be clear that fear was the driving factor for Jonah. No doubt, last week we learned that Jonah had legitimate reason to be afraid of the Ninevites. But Jonah did not alleviate his fears with the power of God to fulfill His words of salvation or judgment in the lives of the Ninevites.

### FEAR VS THE FEAR OF THE LORD: JONAH VS THE SAILORS

- Who in the boat is afraid? (vss. 5, 9 & 10)
- Who is *more* afraid? Who *should be* more afraid?
- How do they act differently according to their fears?
- What is noticeably missing from Jonah’s response to the sailors when they wake him (vs. 9 & 12)? What do you think was going through Jonah’s mind?
- What does Jonah think is the source of the storm?
- What does Jonah’s response in vs. 12 tell us about his heart?
- The sailors feared false gods and Jonah claimed to fear the God of the storm. What is the *ironic*<sup>2</sup> contrast between their responses? (Remember that Jonah is a *prophet* of Israel)
- How do the themes of *salvation* and *judgment* play out in this passage with the characters?<sup>3</sup>
- How is God working through this whole stormy situation?<sup>4</sup>

(continued in next column)

### THE FEAR OF THE LORD AND OUR OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD

- Read Prov. 1:7 and discuss how chapter one would have turned out differently had Jonah acted on the fear of the Lord he claimed he had.
- How does the other fear keep us from obeying the Lord?
- What things do you fear that you know keep you from following the Lord’s will in your life?
- What is more scary—the storm or the God who controls it? Which should we fear more? How do we get there?
- Jonah should have been grievous over the situation his rebellion caused for the lives of the sailors, but he wasn’t. Read 1 Cor. 7:10. What should be our response when we are confronted with our sins?<sup>5</sup>
- Jonah was a prophet of God and so was Jesus but Jesus showed us how a prophet of God perfectly obeys the word of the Lord. Discuss the basic elements of Jesus’ life that suggest a going down and up in order to obey the Father.<sup>6</sup>

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Written by Craig Hurst, ed. J. Lobdell

<sup>2</sup> Fuhr Jr, Richard Alan & Gary E. Yates, *The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), 170.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton Jr., James, *God’s Glory in Salvation Through Judgment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 246-47). Not only do the themes of salvation and judgment play out in this passage but they do so throughout the whole book. As the message series progresses look for these themes in each week’s passage.

<sup>4</sup> For example, was it mere chance that the lots cast by the sailors fell on Jonah? (see Prov. 16:33)

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 66:2

<sup>6</sup> (Categories: submission to the will of the Father, incarnation, cross, burial & resurrection).